investment in the down stream industries and employment generation; and

(h) what is the estimated cost per 1000 cubic meter gas and its proposed sale price from Oman-Gujarat gas pipeline?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) The estimated production of natural gas in the current and the next year are as follows:

1993-94	1994-95
49.57 MMSCMD	52.98 MMSCMD

(b) and (d) to (h) An Expert Group has been constituted to examine the proposal of the Omanese Government to lay a gas pipeline at their cost. Other details will be known only after a detailed feasibility report is completed by them.

(c) The registered demand of 240 MMSCMD cannot be met fully by the end of the Eighth Plan.

Allotment of Stalls in Western and Northern Railways

1797. SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARIBHAI SHUKLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of stalls which have been alloted at various stations in the country particularly in Western and Northern Railways during 1991-92 and 1992-93 and as on date;

(b) if so, the names and owners of the stall Holders and the number of applications received by Government for seeking allotment of Railway stalls;

(c) the criteria fixed for allotment of Railway stalls to the general public and whether there is any special scheme for Ex-servicemen, SC/ST and widows; and

(d) the number of stalls likely to be allotted by the end of 1993 in each State Railway Station for particular items witl the figure of State-wise stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K C. LENKA): (a) The year-wise break-uj of stalls allotted on Western an< Northern Railways is as under:—

Period	Western	Northern
1991-92	9	8
1992-93	25	49
April 1993 onwards	12	17

(b) Details of the licencees are given it the Annexure *[See* Appendix CLXIX Annexure No. *43.]* About 54(applications/representations were received.

(c) The basic criteria is capability reputation, experience and track recorc of the party to provide requisite standard of food and service to the passengers. Preference is given to SC/ST candidate: for allotment of catering/vending licences at small and roadside stations.

(d) State-wise date is not maintained.

Replacement of Steam Locomotives by Diesel Locomotives

1798. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: SHRIMATI MEERA DAS: SHRI SARADA MOHANTY: SHRI G.G. SWELL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ever after replacing steam-based locomotives by diesel-run locomotives, trains have not reduced the time of the journeys;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Rajkot-Ahmedabad intercity-train takes the same travel time today when it is run on diesel-based locomotives as before it was used to take when steam-based locomotive was used on this track; and

(c) what is the advantage of diesel-based locomotive compared to steam-based locomotive?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) This train was introduced w.e.f. 1.10.86 on diesel traction. Subsequently the train was speeded up by 30 minutes.

(c) Better availability due to longer intervals between maintenance schedules, lower operational costs due to diesel locomotives being more fuel efficient and requiring two men crew instead of three on steam locomotives, lower detention for service requirement, extended runs and more hauling capacity at the higher speed.

Survey on Ankola-Hunli B. G. Line

1799. SHRI J. P. JAVALI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in 1992 a feasibility survey was conducted about Ankola-Hubli new broad gauge line;

(b) if so, what are the details of the report; and

(c) whether the new B. G. line is being considered for taking construction during the current Five Year Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A survey for construction of new BG line between Ankola and Hubli was carried out in 1992. The cost of 164 kms long new BG line was assessed at Rs. 236.80 crores with a rate of return of 16.7%. However, in the meantime, conversion of Hospet-Hubli-Goa (489 kms.) has been approved under Project Unigauge. Consequent to this a reappraisal of traffic potential on the proposed line is being done. Further action would depend on the results of the reappraisal and availability of resources in the coming years.

Interim Relief and Merger of D.A. with Pay

*1800. SHRI V. NARAYANA-SAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that All India Railway Employees' Federation expressed its resentment over the Government's announcement of Rs. 100 as interim relief and merger of 20 percent D.A. with pay for retirement benefits which was against the intersts of the railway men in particular and Central Government employees in general;

(b) if so, how Government propose to tackle this; and

(c) whether Government propose to enter into a dialogue with the leaders of the Federation to arrive at a mutually agreed settlement to pave the way for finalisation of terms of reference of the proposed Pay Commission for Centra! Government employees announced by Government; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K C. LENKA): (a) to (c) The Railway employees are represented by the two recognised Unions on the Zonal Railways, one affiliated to All India Railwaymen's Federation and the other to National Federation of Indian Railwaymen. These Federations are signatories to the agreement.

As per extant instructions, no correspondence/dialogue is to be entered into with any unrecognised Union/ Association.

*Previously Unstarred Question No. 492 transferred from 7.12.93.